

Module 5:

Overview Of WIC Services

Table of Contents

Overview	1
What Is WIC?.....	2
WIC Foods.....	4
Food Instruments.....	5
Rights and Obligations of the WIC Participant.....	6
Participant Orientation.....	8
Summary	9
Glossary	11
Progress Check	12
Learning Activities	15
1: WIC Foods.....	16
2: Participants Rights and Obligations.....	18
3: Participant Orientation.....	19
4: Role Plays.....	21
Progress Check Answers	23

Overview

Introduction

This module will help you understand and explain the purpose and services of WIC program.

Learning Objectives

After completing this module, the Community Nutrition Worker (CNW) will be able to:

- explain the purpose of WIC,
 - describe WIC services,
 - explain the rights and responsibilities of the WIC participant,
 - explain the WIC foods for each category and
 - show how to explain WIC services in a role play situation.
-

continued on next page

What is WIC?

Program Description

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for **W**oman, **I**nfants, and **C**hildren.

WIC is a nutrition program that helps low-income pregnant or breastfeeding women, new mothers, and children under 5 years old who have a nutritional risk.

It helps them eat well and stay healthy by providing nutrition education, referrals, and supplemental foods.

Program Goals

The goals of the WIC program are to:

- decrease pregnancy problems,
 - reduce the number of low birth weight infants and
 - support the growth and development of infants and children.
-

Who Does WIC Help?

WIC helps women and children. It helps:

- women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or just had a baby and
- children who are under 5 years old who have a nutritional risk.

WIC helps families with low to medium incomes. This includes many kinds of families. WIC may serve the following families:

- families where 1 parent works,
 - families where 2 parents work,
 - college students,
 - teen parents,
 - foster children and
 - single mothers on TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) or AHCCCS (Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System)
-

continued on next page

What Is WIC? (continued)

What Services Does WIC Give?

WIC provides participants:

- information about nutrition and health.
 - support and information about breastfeeding.
 - information on health care and other community services and
 - special checks to buy foods such as milk, juice, eggs, cheese, cereal, beans and peanut butter.
-

WIC Foods

Supplemental Foods

WIC gives participants some healthy foods and teaches them how to include these foods in their diet. WIC does NOT provide all the foods a participant may need.

WIC Allowed Foods

WIC foods are sometimes called WIC allowed foods. WIC allowed foods are the foods the WIC Program provides to participants.

WIC allowed foods include:

- milk,
 - cheese,
 - eggs,
 - juice,
 - cereal,
 - peanut butter,
 - dry beans and peas,
 - tuna,
 - carrots,
 - infant formula and
 - infant cereal.
-

Infant Formula

WIC provides infant formula for the infants of partially breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding women.

Breastfeeding is an important part of infant nutrition. WIC encourages women to breastfeed.

Learning Activity 1

To learn more about WIC allowed foods, you may want to try **Learning Activity 1** found at the end of this module.

Food Instruments

Food Instruments

WIC gives participants special checks to buy the WIC allowed foods. These checks are called food instruments or WIC checks. WIC food instruments can only be used in grocery stores that have an agreement with the State to provide WIC foods to participants.

WIC food instruments look like checks. They show:

- the participant's name,
 - the first and last day to use,
 - what foods can be bought,
 - how much food can be bought.
-

Rights and Obligations of the WIC Participant

Rights

A participant can expect certain services from the WIC program. These services are sometimes called “rights.”

A participant has the right to:

- be treated fairly and courteously and
- disagree with and appeal any decision made about participation in the WIC program.

Check with your supervisor for information on how complaints are handled by your agency.

Responsibilities

A participant also has responsibilities to the WIC program. A participant should **follow the rules of the WIC agency**.

A participant should:

- enroll at only 1 WIC agency/site.
 - live in area served by the WIC agency.
 - be on time for appointments and call the agency to make up missed appointments.
 - give accurate information to WIC staff.
 - give proof of information as requested.
 - let the WIC agency know if they have a change in address, telephone number or move out of the area.
 - use food instruments properly.
 - be courteous to grocery store and clinic staff.
 - use WIC food only for the WIC participants and
 - report participants, local agencies, or stores that may be breaking WIC rules.
-

continued on next page

Rights and Responsibilities of the WIC Participant (continued)

Responsibilities (continued)

A participant should NOT:

- make changes on any WIC forms or give false information to WIC staff.
 - get WIC food instruments from anyone that does not work at WIC.
 - be rude, disruptive, or threaten anyone at the WIC clinic or the grocery store.
 - get food from the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) while on WIC.
 - use, sell, exchange or trade food instruments for money, credit, payment for credit or other non-WIC goods or services and/or
 - alter (make changes to) a food instrument.
-

WIC ID Folder

You will give participants an ID folder. This folder describes the participant's rights and responsibilities.

The participant is responsible for reading this folder. If s/he cannot read, WIC staff must read the folder to the participant.

Learning Activity 2

To learn more about participant rights and responsibilities you may want to try **Learning Activity 2** found at the end of this module.

Participant Orientation

Participant Orientation

You may be teaching participants about the WIC program when they are first enrolled.

What Do Participants Learn

During participant orientation, participants learn about:

- WIC services,
 - WIC eligibility,
 - participant rights and responsibilities,
 - proxies and authorized representatives,
 - transfers,
 - WIC identification (ID) cards,
 - WIC allowed foods,
 - use of food instruments,
 - follow-up appointments and
 - program abuse.
-

Learning Activity 3

To learn more about participant orientation you may want to try **Learning Activity 3** found at the end of this module.

Learning Activity 4

To learn more about how to explain WIC services to a participant you may want to try **Learning Activity 4** found at the end of this module.

Summary

What Is WIC?

WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

WIC is a nutrition program that helps low to medium-income

- pregnant or breastfeeding women,
- new mothers, and
- children under 5 years old who have a nutritional risk.

WIC gives participants:

- information about nutrition and health.
 - support and information about breastfeeding.
 - help in finding health care and other community services and
 - special checks, called food instruments or WIC checks, to buy foods such as milk, juice, eggs, cheese, cereal, beans and peanut butter.
-

WIC Program Goals

The goals of the WIC program are to:

- decrease pregnancy problems,
 - reduce the number of low birth weight infants and
 - support the growth and development of infants and children.
-

continued on next page

Summary (continued)

Participant Orientation

During participant orientation, participants learn about:

- WIC services,
 - WIC eligibility,
 - participant rights and responsibilities,
 - proxies and authorized representatives,
 - transfers,
 - WIC identification (ID) cards,
 - WIC allowed foods,
 - use of food instruments
 - follow-up appointments and
 - program abuse.
-

Glossary

AHCCCS - Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System, a federal program that provides medical assistance to families in need.

food instrument- A food instrument is a special check given at WIC that is used to buy WIC allowed foods. Food instruments usually contain the participant's name, first and last days to use, type of food, amount of food, and the maximum value of the food instrument.

food package- A WIC food package is a combination of WIC allowed foods that is given to a participant based on the participant's category, age and nutritional need.

infant formula- Infant formula is a specially made mixture of nutrients, usually in a powder or liquid form, usually given to infants when breastfeeding is not chosen.

participant orientation- Participant orientation is the session during which a participant is oriented to the WIC program. This session often covers WIC services, WIC eligibility, participant rights and responsibilities, proxies and authorized representatives, WIC identification (ID) folders, WIC foods, food instruments, and grocery store problems.

role play- A role-play is when 2 or more people act out a scene as though it was "real life". "Props" such as baby dolls or food models are not needed but may be helpful.

supplemental foods- Supplemental foods are nutritious foods that WIC provides participants to improve health during critical periods of growth or development.

TANF- TANF is the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program, a federal program that provides financial assistance to families in need.

WIC- WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. It is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture to help low to medium-income pregnant or breastfeeding women, new mothers, and children under 5 years old who have a nutritional risk. It helps them through nutrition education, breastfeeding information, referrals and supplemental foods.

WIC allowed foods- WIC allowed foods are the foods that participants are able to buy with their WIC food instruments.

WIC check- A WIC check, also called a food instrument, is a special check given at WIC that is used to buy WIC allowed foods.

Progress Check

1. Mark the following as “TRUE” or “FALSE”.

- ☐ WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.
- ☐ WIC serves women and children of all ages.
- ☐ WIC serves low to medium-income families.
- ☐ One of the goals of the WIC program is to decrease pregnancy problems.
- ☐ The WIC foods given to a participant should be enough to meet the participant’s daily needs.
- ☐ Fruit, such as bananas, is a WIC allowed food.
- ☐ WIC food instruments are like checks that a participant uses to buy a WIC allowed food.

2. Put a check mark before the services provided by the WIC program.

- ☐ health care referrals
- ☐ citizenship classes
- ☐ supplemental foods
- ☐ food stamps
- ☐ breastfeeding information and support
- ☐ nutrition education

Progress Check (continued)

3. Put a check mark before the WIC allowed foods.

☐ milk
☐ fruit
☐ green beans
☐ eggs
☐ cheese
☐ bread
☐ cereal
☐ peanut butter
☐ canned garbanzo beans

4. Put a check mark before the items that are considered participant **responsibilities**.

☐ live in the area served by the WIC agency.
☐ use WIC foods only for WIC participants.
☐ can appeal any decisions made regarding participation in the WIC program.
☐ should be treated fairly and courteously.
☐ be on time for appointments.
☐ provide verification documentation as requested.

Progress Check (continued)

5. List at least 5 topics you would need to present to a participant during participant orientation.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

Learning Activities

The following activities are included and are recommended for interactive learning:

- Learning Activity 1: WIC Foods
- Learning Activity 2: Participant Rights & Responsibilities
- Learning Activity 3: Participant Orientation
- Learning Activity 4: Role Plays

Activity 1: WIC Foods

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will:

- become familiar with the WIC allowed foods.
-

Background

There are many different WIC food packages. Each food package contains a different combination of WIC allowed foods.

The food package that a participant receives depends on the participant's category, age and nutritional need.

Your local agency will have information on what each food package contains.

Instructions

1. Ask your mentor or supervisor for:
 - WIC Allowed Foods List.
 2. Look over this list and become familiar with it.
 3. Ask a co-worker or your supervisor to go over some of the food packages with you.
 4. Write down your notes on the form on the next page.
-

Activity 1: WIC Foods (Continued)

Food Package Number	Contents	Participant Category

Activity 2: Participant Rights & Obligations

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- identify the participant's rights and responsibilities.

Background

A participant can expect certain services from the WIC program. These services are sometimes called "rights."

A participant also has responsibilities or obligations to the WIC program. These responsibilities are the rules the participant should follow as a participant in the WIC program.

Instructions

1. Ask your supervisor for the WIC ID folder. This describes the WIC participant's rights and responsibilities.
 2. Read over the ID folder. Do you understand each right and responsibility?
 3. Discuss these rights and responsibilities with your supervisor.
-

Activity 3: Participant Orientation

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- Identify what information is given to participants during participant orientation.

Background

During participant orientation, participants learn about:

- WIC services,
- WIC eligibility,
- participant rights and responsibilities,
- proxies and alternates,
- transfers,
- WIC identification (ID) cards,
- WIC allowed foods,
- use of food instruments,
- follow-up appointments and
- program abuse.

Instructions

1. Arrange to observe participant orientation given at your local agency. If your agency does orientation as a class and as an individual session, make sure to observe both.
 2. Record your notes on the form on the next page. Check off the items when applicable.
 3. Discuss your observations with your supervisor.
-

Activity 3: Participant Orientation (Continued)

Did session cover	✓	Notes:
• WIC services?		
• WIC eligibility?		
• participant rights & responsibilities?		
• proxies & alternates?		
• transfers?		
• WIC identification (ID) cards?		
• WIC allowed foods?		
• use of food instruments?		
• program abuse?		
Other information:		

Activity 4: Role Plays

Learning Objectives

After completing this activity, the CNW will be able to:

- explain WIC services in a role-play situation.

Instructions

1. Ask your supervisor or a co-worker to role-play any 3 of the 5 roles (A-E) described on the following page.
 2. Using the information you have learned about the WIC program, act out the role of a WIC CNW for each of the 3 situations.
 3. Mentor / Supervisor / Co-Worker: Using the role-plays as your guide, act out the role of the applicant or participant. Try to be as realistic as possible.
 4. After each session, ask your co-worker to tell you what she noticed. Make sure to ask for your strengths as well as weaknesses.
-

Activity 4: Role Plays (Continued)

Role Play A	Julie Stedman calls the WIC agency in her area. She is not familiar with WIC. A friend who knows she is pregnant suggested she call. You answer the phone. She wants to know what WIC provides.
Role Play B	Alicia David is new to WIC. Your agency usually gives the participant orientation session as a group session but Alicia missed the session. You want to make sure she gets all the information she missed.
Role Play C	Rosaria Mendoza is attending your group participant orientation session. She speaks English but is not familiar with a lot of the terms such as “referrals,” “food instruments,” or “WIC allowed foods.” She, as well as the other participants, wants to know what she will be getting at WIC.
Role Play D	Perveen Jihani has just moved to your area from another state where she was on WIC. She calls to find out about the WIC services your agency provides. You do not usually answer your agency’s main line but have been asked to do so since your co-worker who usually does so is sick.
Role Play E	Linda Chao approaches you while you are in the parking lot of your agency. You are returning from lunch and she asks you if you work at the WIC site. You tell her you do. She seems interested in WIC and asks you if WIC could help her since she is pregnant.

Progress Check Answers

1. Mark the following as “TRUE” or “FALSE”.

- ☒ WIC is the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.
- ☐ WIC serves women and children of all ages.
- ☒ WIC serves low to medium-income families.
- ☒ One of the goals of the WIC program is to decrease pregnancy problems.
- ☐ The WIC foods given to a participant should be enough to meet the participant’s daily needs.
- ☐ Fruit, such as bananas, is a WIC allowed food.
- ☒ WIC food instruments are like checks that a participant uses to buy a WIC allowed food.

2. Put a check mark before the service provided by the WIC program.

- ☒ health care referrals
- ☐ citizenship classes
- ☒ supplemental foods
- ☐ food stamps
- ☒ breastfeeding information and support
- ☒ nutrition education

Progress Check Answers (continued)

3. Put a check mark before the WIC allowed foods.

☒ milk
☐ fruit
☐ green beans
☒ eggs
☒ cheese
☐ bread
☒ cereal
☒ peanut butter
☐ canned garbanzo beans

4. Put a check mark before the items that are considered participant **responsibilities**.

☒ live in the area served by the WIC agency.
☒ use WIC foods only for family.
☐ can appeal any decisions made regarding participation in the WIC program.
☐ should be treated fairly and courteously.
☒ be on time for appointments.
☒ provide verification documentation as requested.

Progress Check Answers (continued)

5. List at least 5 topics you would need to present to a participant during participant orientation.

Answers could be any 5 of these:

- ***WIC services,***
- ***WIC eligibility,***
- ***participant rights and responsibilities,***
- ***proxies and alternates,***
- ***transfers,***
- ***WIC identification (ID) cards,***
- ***WIC allowed foods,***
- ***use of food instruments,***
- ***follow-up appointments, and***
- ***program abuse.***